HOLIDAY

Tom Kimmell/Gazette Telegraph

Vietnam veterans Charles Laughlin, center, and Odell David, right, salute during the posting of colors Saturday at the Veterans Day ceremony in Memorial Park.

Those who answered call to arms honored

Veterans Day a time for pride

By **Lou Gonzales**
Gazette Telegraph

The only thing Junior Weismantel, 70, has in common with Robert Gramlich, a young Canadian Air Force corporal, is a uniform.

But that was all it took to bring them together at Memorial Park on Saturday.

Weismantel, dressed in the same brown uniform he wore during World War II, and Gramlich, in Canadian Air Force blue, joined about 200 veterans and their families who braved cold, gusty winds for the Pikes Peak Veterans Council's Veterans Day ceremony.

Guest speaker Col. John Hamilton expressed regrets for missing officials who were attending the Army-Air Force game at Falcon Stadium to a forgiving crowd.

"The vets council did a good job of getting all these people together. That's a lot to ask for," said retired 1st Sgt. Ken Freese, who wears Purple Hearts from World War II and the Korean War.

Lea Dickinson would have been satisfied if only one more person attended the ceremony. Her brother, Mark Danielson, was shot down over the Laotian border in 1972.

"He was just 29," said Dickinson, who is active with Task Force Omega, an organization that advocates for families of troops missing in action. "We know from official sources that he survived the crash and was moved to another area. But the crash site was recently excavated and only 38 bones were found for the eight-person crew. They (government officials) won't allow DNA testing. They could have dog bones for all we know."

Dickinson explained the significance of a small table covered with a white cloth and topped with four hats representing each of the four services.

"The table is small. This symbolizes frailty of our POWs, MIAs and those who have lost their lives. And the cloth is white to symbolize the purity of intention of those who responded to the call to arms," said Dickinson.

But perhaps most significantly, the table was set with a slice of lemon, to signify the bitterness experienced by loved ones, and a small mound of salt, symbolizing the tears of families left behind.

SCHOOLS

Cheyenne district just says 'no' to drugs, drinking

Schools enlist parents in war on substance abuse

By **Rosemary Harris**/Gazette Telegraph

Shaken by community reports of underage drinking and teen drug use, officials in Cheyenne Mountain School District 12 are crafting an initiative to combat student substance abuse.

The initiative, still in its fledgling stages, would draw parents into neighborhood coalitions — parents, school volunteers, neighbors — aimed at stopping weekend beer parties and school-day drinking and drug use.

"We function like a little town over here. We trust each other and respect each other," said D-12 Superintendent Harlan Else. "And basically our children are good kids. They do well academically.

"But the word here is that we have a real problem with this. We feel our community — by linking its strength and resources — has the ability to stop it."

The neighborhood groups would be linked, when necessary, to law enforcement, social service agencies, treatment programs and other organizations for help, Else said.

"What we're hearing is that parents feel lonely," Else said. "They don't know where to turn. We feel there is a way that families can support each other. If a 15-year-old comes home and says, 'Well, Mom, everybody stays out until 2 a.m. on Fridays,' parents could come together so that none of those children are allowed to stay out that late. We feel parents could find strength in coming together and the focus would be drinking and drug use."

The proposed initiative would also place greater emphasis on abuse prevention and awareness in classrooms.

"What researchers are finding is that early alcohol and drug abuse often leads to academic failure and higher incidences of teen-age sex, teen pregnancy and teen crime," said Cheyenne Mountain High School Assistant Principal John McPherson. "We are concerned about our children. The signs are bad. The drinkin' and druggin' is a reality — and so are the consequences."

For at least a year, school officials have discussed the problem and brainstormed ways to deal with it, Else said.

At a school board meeting last month, board President Ted Lewis brought it up again. Parents spoke about what they had heard about weekend drinking parties and drug use. And the board directed the administration to pursue some solutions.

Like other school districts, D-12 has DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) drug prevention programs in place. Substance abuse

See **CHEYENNE**/B3

RICH TOSCHES
is on vacation. His column will resume this week.

INSIDE

'I'm O.K. — You're O.K.' gun test required in Texas

Taking a page from such pop-psychology classics of the 1960s as "I'm O.K. — You're O.K." and "Games People Play," Texas requires applicants for a concealed-weapons permit to pass a test on the nonviolent resolution of conflicts.

In other words, if anyone expects to pack a hidden gun in the Lone Star State, they had better first get in touch with their inner child.

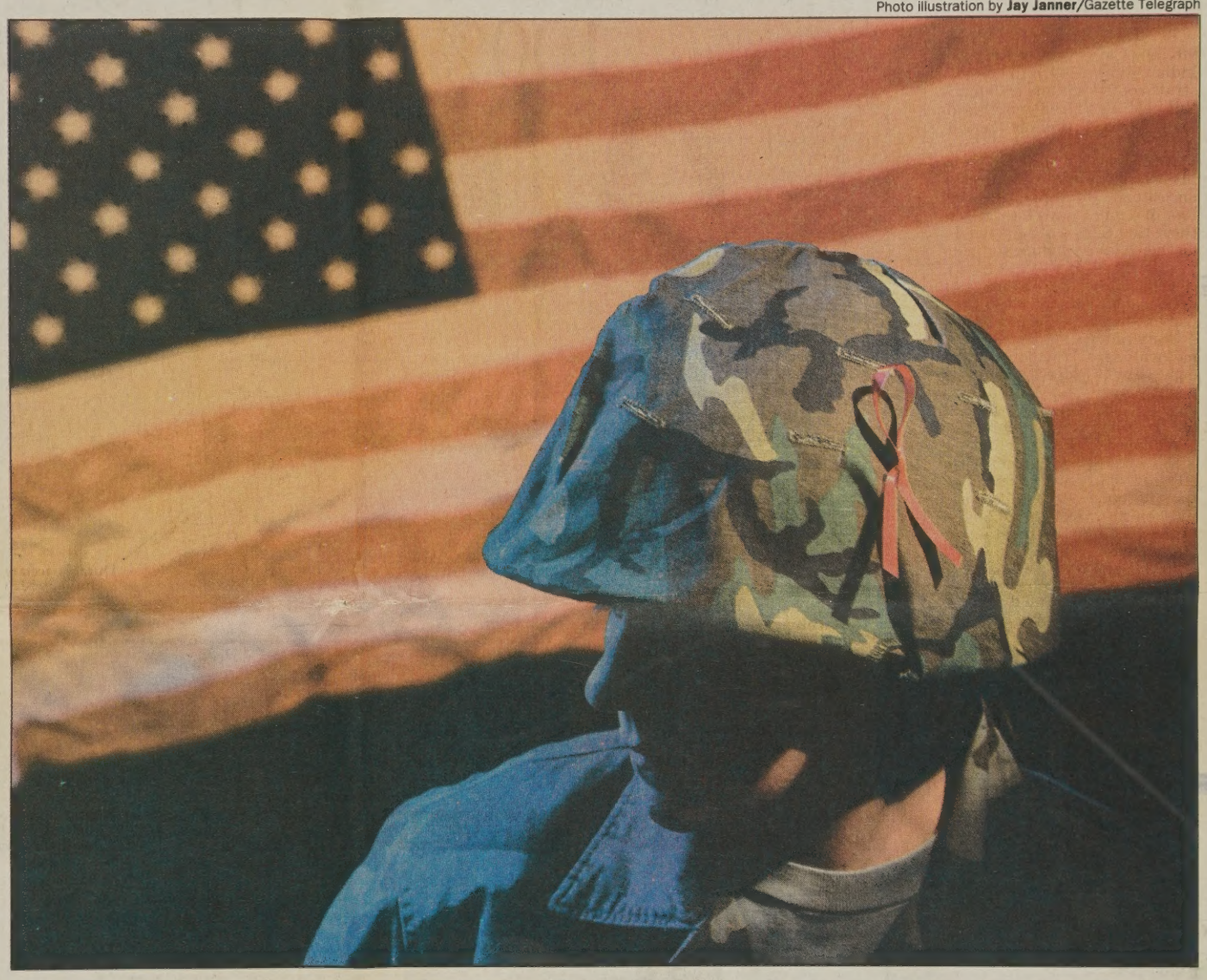
In a state that mythologizes laconic cowboys, the course is derided by some as psychobabble, but others say it's the logical product of a modern society in which Americans are fascinated with guns and exploring their own inner feelings. **Complete report**/B2

■ **A GOAL:** Five months after taking over Falcon School District 49, Superintendent Donna Nicholson can point to higher test scores./**B6**

Opinion/B14

MILITARY

Photo illustration by **Jay Janner**/Gazette Telegraph



A bill to discharge within six months troops who test positive for the AIDS virus has cast a shadow over the future of more than 1,000 soldiers, sailors and airmen who had previously been allowed to keep serving and receiving medical care. Its chief sponsor is Rep. Robert Dornan, R-Calif.

Trying to soldier with HIV

Legislation could force the discharge of infected troops

By **Genevieve Anton**
Gazette Telegraph

The military has always prided itself on taking care of its own, and troops infected with the AIDS virus are no exception.

For more than a decade, the military's policy has been to let infected service members stay on active duty in the United States until they are no longer able to perform their jobs.

But that will end if Congress approves a bill — over the objections of the Defense Department — to discharge within six months soldiers who test positive for HIV. The measure would leave an estimated 1,160 soldiers, sailors and airmen now infected with the virus scrounging for work and possibly health care while they cope with the emotional stress of a virtual death sentence.

Critics of the proposed law say active-duty victims make an easy target, because most refuse to speak out in their own defense for fear of backlash from co-workers and friends.

Local military bases report at least a dozen new cases of HIV each year, according to the El Paso County Health Department. But despite encouragement from military and civilian social workers, not one of these infected service members would agree to be interviewed for this article — even if granted complete anonymity.

So what little debate there is goes on 1,600 miles away between a handful of AIDS advocates and politicians in Washington, D.C.

"It's dumb. It's unfair. And it's bad policy," said Jay Coburn of the AIDS Action Council, a Washington-based advocacy group that is fighting the legislation. "Why take people who are able to work — in whom the military has invested tens of thousands of dollars to train — and prevent them from repaying that investment by serving in any way they can?"

Troops with HIV are not allowed to serve overseas, which means they cannot hold combat positions or be deployed outside the country. That is why the bill's chief sponsor, conservative Rep. Robert Dornan, R-Calif., says he wants them out.

"This is a very misunderstood issue until people grasp one simple thing," he said. "When someone tests positive, everything changes. They're called back from overseas, grounded from aircraft and helicopters, taken off ships, dragged out of tanks. Their guns are taken away, and they can never fire a mortar round or use a bombing range. They are basically useless."

But service members are put on limited assignment for various other medical reasons: asthma, cancer, diabetes, heart disease and pregnancy. Most are transferred to different or less strenuous jobs as long as they are able to work.

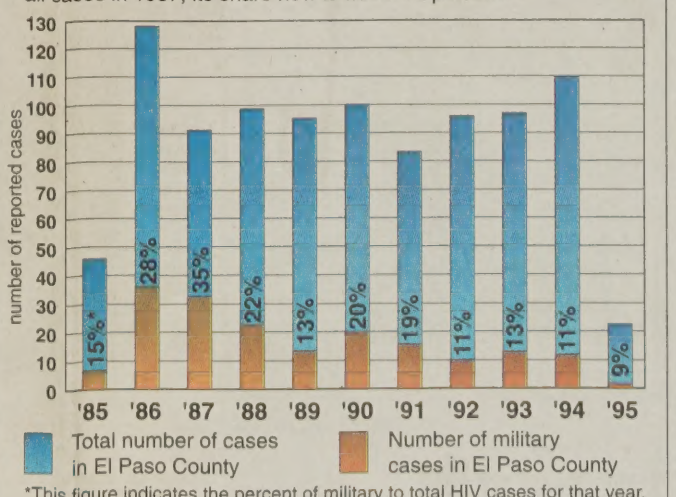
AIDS advocates say it's discriminatory to single out HIV troops for discharge. But Dornan argues that they are somehow different

See **HIV**/B2

Gazette Telegraph

Military HIV cases

Although the number of new HIV cases in El Paso County grows slightly higher each year, the military is reporting fewer than ever before. So while the military accounted for more than one-third of all cases in 1987, its share now is about 12 percent.



*This figure indicates the percent of military to total HIV cases for that year.

Source: El Paso County Health Department

■ Military's AIDS research in jeopardy/**B2**

HIV/Critics see an attack on gays

From B1

and it's unfair to others who must serve in their place or lose their jobs to military cutbacks.

"Why do we fire healthy, law-abiding Americans to give their jobs to someone who used a filthy needle, went to a whorehouse where all the prostitutes are infected or had sex with another man in a dirty bathroom stall?" said Dornan, who insists his solution has nothing to do with conservative politics.

But opponents see it as a thinly veiled assault on gay men and lesbians.

"It is very clear from Dornan's untempered comments that the issue here is not military readiness," said retired Navy Cmdr. Hank Carde, who now lobbies for people with AIDS. "His is a homophobic crusade to get rid of gays in the military, while hurting a lot of victims who are not his targets."

Carde, a Yale graduate with three degrees, tested positive for HIV in 1988. But he said he probably was infected all through the 1980s while serving on ships and in the Pentagon in strenuous jobs with high stress and long hours.

"If this policy had existed while I was still in uniform," Carde said, "the military would have kicked me out and hundreds of thousands of dollars in education and training would have been flushed down the old crapper."

Since 1985, the military has been testing active-duty personnel every two years for HIV infection. A total of 125 cases have been diagnosed at local bases since then, or 14 percent of the county's known cases.

> "It would be illegal to get rid of a policeman with the virus, but here we are making a separate rule for the military that the military says it doesn't want or need."
>
> **San Diego attorney Tim Pestotnik**

The medical care, counseling and support offered HIV patients by the military is considered top-notch. The treatment is also compassionate: records are confidential; discrimination is officially taboo; and full medical benefits are extended after the patient is discharged.

"Our position is that an HIV-positive soldier is, in essence, still a soldier who has several more years to contribute to military service," said Maj. Paula K. Underwood, who coordinates the HIV education, testing and treatment program at Evans Army Community Hospital. "We want to keep that person in the Army as long as we can."

If a soldier wants out, there is such a thing as a "compassionate discharge," but that would mean forfeiture of guaranteed medical care.

Under the proposed legislation, they wouldn't have a choice.

"Obviously, this is something we don't want to see happen," Underwood said. "It gets back to the basic heart of humanity: treating people with respect and compassion. They are still soldiers — and they are still human."

Critics of the proposal argue that it doesn't make much economic sense, either.

Discharged HIV patients would find it almost impossible to get private medical insurance, they say, so the burden would fall on overloaded public health care systems such as veterans hospitals and Medicaid programs. Others may fall back on welfare for food and housing, instead of earning a military paycheck.

"Just because somebody tests positive doesn't mean they can't work," said Karen Baker of the Southern Colorado AIDS Projects. "It's not like you all of a sudden become sick — it can take eight to 10 years before any symptoms appear and even longer until death. It's just so unfair."

While civilian employers are not allowed to fire HIV-infected workers under the Americans with Disabilities Act, legal experts say the courts have usually deferred to the Pentagon when it comes to military personnel matters.

"It would be illegal to get rid of a policeman with the virus," said Tim Pestotnik, an attorney in San Diego who runs a free legal clinic for AIDS victims. "But here we are making a separate rule for the military that the military says it doesn't want or need."

The Defense Department officially opposes the bill to discharge HIV-positive troops, arguing it is unnecessary because less than one-tenth of 1 percent of the active-duty force is infected. In a recent memo to Congress, Pentagon officials said "we see no prudent reason to separate and replace them," in part because it would be expensive to recruit and train new troops.

But even opponents expect the legislation to pass as part of the 1996 Defense Authorization Bill. Congressional negotiators have reached a tentative compromise that would allow discharged service members to use military medical facilities. But a final version of the bill has not been sent to the House and Senate, so it's unknown whether that compromise will hold up.

Unusual AIDS research program in jeopardy

Ousting patients from military might halt tests

By **Genevieve Anton**
Gazette Telegraph

If Congress forces the military to discharge troops who test positive for HIV, health officials say it might jeopardize one of the nation's most unusual AIDS research programs.

The Defense Department has long been at the cutting edge of developing treatments for HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. Last year, it spent $40 million on research and clinical trials to slow advancement of the disease.

But without HIV-positive troops, there would be no one to test.

"Take away our patients and there's not much we can do — it would hurt us big time," said Dr. Kenneth Wagner, director of clinical research at the Henry M. Jackson Foundation for the Advancement of Military Medicine.

Under a defense contract, the nonprofit center in Bethesda, Md., coordinates research at three major AIDS clinics where infected service members or retirees come twice a year for blood testing, experimental drugs and group therapy.

The data gathered from these patients, Wagner said, yields invaluable information that benefits all AIDS victims. For example, foundation researchers last year discovered a new strain of the virus that is resistant to AZT, a drug commonly used to fight HIV.

In the military, the progress of HIV infection can be tracked from its earliest stages, since troops are tested regularly. Service members also offer a diverse slice of society and are more compliant and reliable than civilian volunteers.

"The military has one of the best clinical research programs in the world," said Jay Coburn of the AIDS Action Council in Washington, D.C. "Shutting it down would have profound implications for our understanding of the virus."

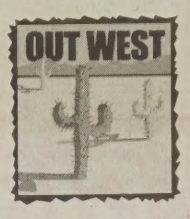
Congressional negotiators are talking about extending full medical benefits to ousted HIV-positive soldiers, which would enable them to continue using military hospitals or research clinics on a space-available basis. But the foundation would have to arrange and pay for travel, which Wagner says it can't afford.

THE WEST

'Make my day?' Not if you plan to pack a gun in Texas

New York Times News Service

HOUSTON — To carry a concealed weapon in Texas, a person must pay a $140 application fee, have no history of major crime or mental illness, demonstrate an understanding of use-of-force laws and pass a shooting proficiency test with a .38-caliber revolver or a 9 mm semiautomatic handgun.



And one other thing: the applicant must be in touch with his or her inner child.

As part of a 12-hour course required under a new law that will soon allow Texans to carry hidden guns for the first time in more than a century, state residents must pass a test covering the rudiments of nonviolent, conflict-resolution techniques.

Borrowing directly from pop-psychology classics of the 1960s and '70s such as "Games People Play" and "I'm O.K. — You're O.K.," the official state gun-class curriculum requires that applicants for a gun permit know about the three "ego states" said to exist within everyone: the parent, the child, and the adult.

To minimize the risk of gunfire in any dispute ranging from a minor traffic accident to a holdup, the state says, people who carry a gun must first do everything they can to elevate the conflict from emotion to logic — or, in the psychological vernacular, to the adult-to-adult mode.

That is also known as the "we-we" or "win-win" mode of communication, as opposed to the more violence-prone "I-you" mode, which exists when someone's inner child is dealing with someone else's inner child or inner parent.

"Move the verbal encounter toward resolution incorporating as much 'win-win' strategy as possible," says the state's official lesson plan. "'Adult to adult' or 'I'm-O.K. — you're-O.K.' is very de-escalating."

To be sure, in a state that mythologizes laconic cowboys, it is possible to find Texans who deride the new curriculum as psychobabble, while others suggest the curriculum is the logical product of a modern society in which Americans are fascinated with guns and exploring their own inner feelings.

And so it is that shooting instructors such as Mike Myrtoglou, at the Texas Shooter Range, find themselves offering psychological guidance to people applying for permits to carry concealed weapons.

Myrtoglou, a barrel-chested man with a Glock semiautomatic strapped to his side, gets a laugh when he says that Clint Eastwood's famous "make my day" line in the 1983 film "Sudden Impact" was classic inner-child behavior. "Wrong, wrong, wrong," the instructor says.

In another class, Hanan Yadin, a licensed instructor who is a former marksman in the Israeli Defense Force, poses the case of an obscenity-laced oral argument with a stranger after a traffic argument.

"You want to get to adult to adult," he says. "So you might say: 'Sir, we are both in the same unfortunate situation here. Let's see what we can do to resolve the situation together.' "

Just how often traffic accidents will lead to drawn guns is an open question.

But the Texas courses, which began in September running up to Jan. 1, when citizens will be able to carry concealed weapons legally, do offer a "top 10 signs of impending emotional disturbance," a kind of guide to when the risks of someone pulling out a concealed gun would be at their highest.

Among the symptoms are clenched fists, increasingly rapid breathing, sweating, tremors, stuttering speech and an intense or fixated stare.

Texas is the ninth state in the last two years, and the 28th overall, to enact a concealed-gun law, reflecting a growing public fear of crime.

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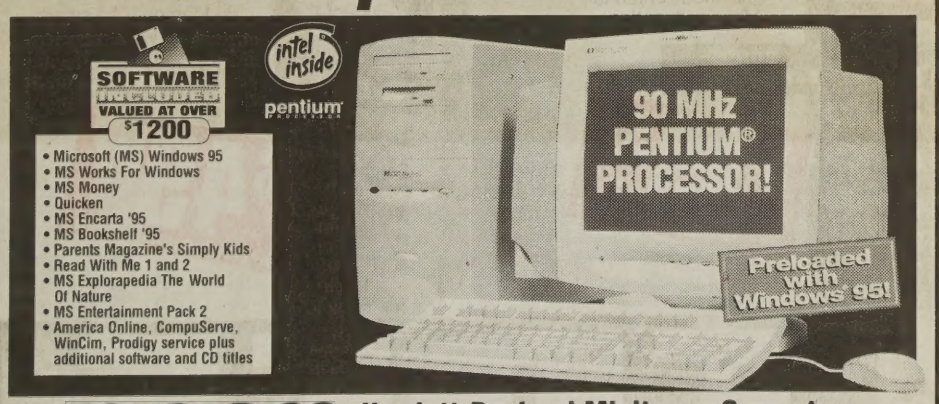
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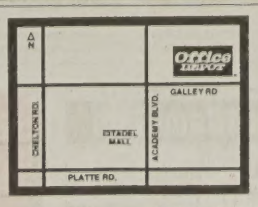

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